

THE QUIVER

Saturday, January 30, 1869.



"With the light shining down on her uncovered head."—p. 260.

ESTHER WEST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PEGGY OGLIVIE'S INHERITANCE."

CHAPTER XXXIV.—A BAD BUSINESS.

MRS. WIGGETT'S temper had not improved with time. She was like a crab-apple—none the sweeter for the sunshine, and she managed sometimes to set her husband's teeth on edge. Having once found

his old love, Martin Potter's wife, he (Mr. Wiggett) would not let her drop again. Perfectly conscious of his integrity of heart, he visited Mary in her widowhood from time to time, taking with him little

presents of fruit and flowers for the children. If there was anything Timothy coveted, it was his neighbours' children; and he coveted little Mary Potter more than all the rest, and would have taken her to live with him entirely if her mother would have given consent. But, true and faithful as he was to the vixenish little woman he had married, he could not help making comparisons when he saw Mary take all manner of petty troubles—which would have made his home unendurable—so sweetly, that they only showed like ripples on the surface of a river. The wind might blow and ruffle the water, it never impeded its deep, harmonious flow.

At first he had given a strict account of his visits; but his information had always been so ill received, and followed by such an increase of crabbedness, that he ceased to mention them.

But so surely as he ceased to mention them, Sarah Wiggett, sharp as a needle, suspected that he went without letting her know, and made a far greater grievance of the suspicion. It was not within Timothy's skill to minister to the diseased mind of his wife, and he shrugged his shoulders and went on his way, a good deal less happy than he deserved to be.

One day in February—it was the twenty-fifth—Timothy went into town, with the intention of seeing Mary Potter before he came back, and of asking his favourite Polly, and perhaps one or two more, to spend a week at Hurst. The little girl had been with them at Christmas, and, though Sarah had not been cordial, he thought the child's visit had done her good. Esther had been staying at Redhurst at the same time, and had brought Constance Vaughan about the place; to all of which proceedings Mrs. Wiggett had, no doubt, objected; but Timothy argued that it was necessary to assert his individual freedom sometimes, and that he could hardly assert it in a more armless way. He, however, determined to say nothing in the present instance until it was a settled matter that the little girl should come.

Mrs. Wiggett happened to know that he had not much business to transact, and drew her own conclusions when her husband named a rather late hour for his return, though on this occasion he was not going to start till after their noonday dinner. No sooner was he fairly off than she ran up to her room and donned out-door attire—a thick veil and a dark, long-unused cloak—and started in his track. She had to walk to the station, while he was driving; but if she was lucky enough to catch a train, she would arrive at the place of his destination almost as soon as he.

The little woman was lucky enough to catch a train, and, having walked from Waterloo Station to the nursery and seedsman's place which her husband had indicated, was also lucky enough to see him alight there, and remain in the back premises long

enough, Mrs. Wiggett believed, to transact all the business of the world.

A patient street boy was holding his horse all the time. And what was she to do when he came out and remounted, and drove quietly back? She had never considered what she would do in any case, and she did not determine that. Only, as she passed up and down, she got more weary, and crosser than ever.

At last his burly figure could be seen in the doorway, and she only just checked herself from running up to him and exclaiming against the time he had kept her waiting. He mounted his seat, and drove away. She hastened after to the turning-point. It was the wrong way he went, and the fiercest passion she had ever experienced became as smoke compared to that which burst into conflagration at the sight. She hastened along the crowded street, sometimes on and sometimes off the pavement, keeping the vehicle in sight. It was no difficult matter, as, owing to the crowded state of the thoroughfare, Timothy was obliged to drive slowly; but near St. James's Palace her pace became a run, causing the passers-by to stop and stare after her.

The wagonette entered the park, and went bowling under the leafless trees at a rate which soon left her utmost speed behind. Still, she kept up her pace, and, when she could no longer see it at a distance, held on her way, with the fixed purpose now of tracking him to his haunt.

After a time, she was astonished to find that the wagonette had stopped—was stopping, drawn up to the side of the carriage-way. She walked on. Timothy had dismounted—was talking to some one. Dare she venture closer? Yes; she would risk discovery to gratify her curiosity; march boldly up to Timothy, if need be, and tell him she had started off after him to visit Mary. She walked up, passed quite close, taking the side to which Timothy's back was turned, looked keenly into the man's face who was talking to him, heard a few disjointed words, and hid herself behind a tree which stood close beside them.

The two men talked for some time in low tones, and then she saw her husband remount, and, instead of going forward in the direction of Mary Potter's house, turn back the way he had come. But Sarah Wiggett no longer followed him. She followed his companion, across the park and out at its western entrance, making herself quite sure of his identity, and then she returned and sat down on a bench, in the piercing cold of the already darkening day.

As Timothy Wiggett was driving steadily along, he had been astonished by a shout, which rose from the wayside, and by a stranger, evidently desiring to stop his course. He had stopped accordingly, and no long time sufficed to discover who the stranger was. They had never known each other, except by sight; but Timothy Wiggett knew that he confronted his

wife's former husband, even before the other had declared his name. He made haste to dismount, very red in the face, and his mouth falling dismally at the corners. Latterly, he had persuaded himself that he was not bound to believe in the existence of Ned Brown, except on ocular demonstration; and that was at length forthcoming.

The two men shook hands as a preliminary. They had no spite against each other, and it was so far well. Then Ned Brown opened the conversation, and, alluding to the position, shook his head, and said it was a bad business.

"A shocking bad business," said Timothy.

Then each asked the other what was to be done, and both were in utter perplexity.

"You ought to have her by rights," said Timothy.

"But I don't know that I particularly want her now—now that she's been your wife for years," said Ned; "and she mayn't want me neither."

Then a thought came into Timothy's mind for which he would have blushed, if he had been capable of blushing; but nature could not achieve a deeper red than already showed in the honest gardener's face. If Ned would take Sarah back again, he would be free, and there was Mary Potter, a widow, and with a family—the whole ten were not too many for Timothy. But Mary's sweet, sad eyes, came into his mind to reprove him, and looked down the selfish thought. What he said was, "Suppose we give her choice?"

"How?" said Ned Brown.

"Why, you go and see Sarah, and don't say I know anything. I'll give you a chance. Then you ask her whether she'll go with you or stay with me, and it'll be all right, won't it, whichever way it goes? You've married her and I've married her, and we've both got a right to do the best we can by her—that's all I can see."

"No I won't. If you're so willing to stick to your bargain, I'll not come between her and you. I thought you might be rather glad to be rid on't. And I came back only to make amends to her. She's better off with you than ever she was with me, so I'll take myself off as quietly as I can."

"It's all right, I suppose?" said Timothy. If he could have explained, he would have said, not in point of legal but of moral right, "I didn't know, and you didn't know, and she didn't know." The case was evidently too much for him. It was bewildering his brain, or else a seizure of apoplexy was threatening him, which seemed probable, for he added, "I would like you to let me know if you die first."

"I'll send you word," said the other, with a grim smile; "but you can think of me as one gone to another world. I'm off." And the two men parted company.

"No," thought Timothy, as he drove away, "she'll never know anything about it. If I've done wrong, I mean right by her." He never thought of appro-

priating the blessing of the merciful, but only of being made to bear the blame alone.

Ned Brown, looking after him, said to himself, "That's the best fellow in creation, and Sally's been a lucky woman at last."

And while Timothy, in no mood to pay his intended visit, was driving back to his home, and with kinder thoughts than usual for his wife, because she stood more in need of kindness, she, unhappy woman, cursed by her jealous temper, as well as by the fear of the retribution which awaited her, was wandering distractedly, driven by the terrible resolution to return no more. She could not believe in mercy, for she was herself unmerciful—in generosity, for she was herself ungenerous; and she could no more have believed her Timothy capable of the resolution he was even then acting out, than she could have been capable of a similar act. She believed that from henceforth and for ever he would close his heart and his house against her. With her wonderful acuteness she jumped to the conclusion that he would at once think of Mary Potter. He had turned back only to dismiss her.

How she hated that man who had spoilt her life! She was mad with rage, and hate, and despair; but in the midst of it she felt faint with hunger. Going out of the park, she wandered into the Westminster district, on the other side. There she went into a baker's shop and bought a few cakes; then she wandered back again, and sat down on a bench to eat them, which she did greedily. She had resolved not to live another night—and the night was fast falling.

CHAPTER XXXV.

STREET LAMPS.

THE evening of the 25th was closing in when Esther went up to her little room to dress for Mrs. West's "at home." She had promised to go early, and be with Kate an hour or two before the other guests arrived. This party was an ordeal from which she shrank almost with pain, for she knew that she would encounter there some who had known her as Esther West, and who had ignored her very existence as Esther Potter. But Mr. Vaughan, her firm friend and adviser, was to be there, and Constance, who had held to her with more than a sister's affection, and Milly, whose precious baby was to be accommodated for the night up-stairs, while its mother joined in the gaieties below, and they had all united in pressing her to come, till it seemed impossible to refuse without a reason more palpable to them than incongruity of circumstances. There was in her heart, too, a natural desire to re-visit a scene, though the scene was only an evening party, which had been familiar to her—to look upon it with other eyes and from another point of view.

So from among the treasures of her past, most of which had already been adapted to the uses of the

present, Esther took a dress of silvery grey silk, and a set of silver ornaments. She usually wore her hair coiled up in the simplest fashion ; its royal lengths, which, when shaken out, fell below her waist in wavy masses, formed a natural crown. She did not alter it in any way—only bound it with a band of silver filagree, while another of the same encircled her head a little above the brow. It was a fashion trying enough to most faces and figures, but it suited perfectly with hers. It gave to view the full play of the regal neck and shoulders, and the classical beauty of the outlines of cheek and chin. Her dress was simple to severity—not a touch of colour to relieve it ; but the silver bands shone on the lofty head, and the lights and shadows played among the folds of the silvery silk in perfect harmony with her quiet but majestic beauty.

The cab was waiting in the street, but she had to walk up the court and passage that led to it. However, it was dark enough to shelter her from prying eyes, and cold enough for everybody to be in-doors. Just where the cab stood, a street lamp threw its light upon the pavement, and as Esther stood for a moment beneath it, Philip, carrying his basket of tools, came up on the other side. Intent on gathering up her skirts, she did not see him ; but he had seen her, with the light shining down on her uncovered head, with its glittering silver braids, and glancing on a lovely arm, that gleamed white as snow in the darkness.

And now she had entered the cab, and the door was shut. She was about to be whirled away to shine in another sphere, a sphere into which he could not enter—could not follow her ; and a fountain of bitterness welled up in his heart at the thought, all the more bitter because of the sweetness of his nature, all the more terrible to him because he could not control it—could not at the moment tell from whence it sprang.

Esther, looking out at the cab window as she drove away, saw and recognised him, and wondered at the sternness of the fixed white face. She smiled and nodded, but he had not seen her then. Was he displeased at her for indulging in the gaieties of the world ? she asked herself. And she carried with her a graver air because of the stern look which he had worn.

But not for her—all the sternness was for himself, for his own jealous heart, for his own broken peace—the peace which was to him the sign and token of a Divine presence. He had entered upon a terrible eclipse of the spirit. This fair moon had come between him and the sun—had been coming slowly between him and spiritual light and heat—and now all of sudden it was total darkness.

He passed up to his solitary room, and went mechanically through his ordinary evening routine. He lighted the fire which was already laid, and prepared his evening meal. Then he sat down, not with

unwashed hands, to eat bread, literally bread, and nothing else. There was no one to say how tired and ill he looked, no kind eyes to rest upon, or to rest upon him and lighten by sharing his trouble, whatever it was. He drank the tea he had prepared, but the bread he scarcely broke : it seemed to choke him. Mechanically he put the meal aside, and sat down at the bare deal table, crossing his arms upon it, and laying his head upon them.

There he sat motionless, till the sensation of choking made him start up, with the veins swollen on his fair temples, and a dry glare like madness in his eyes. Any one who had looked in on Philip then, might have thought him mad. He walked up and down like a caged creature. He smote his temples with his open palms. He ground his teeth together. He stretched his arms out to the empty air, as if to embrace something, and then let them fall, as if lifeless, by his side.

But Philip was not mad ; only a long-growing, long-repressed passion had burst forth, and obtained the mastery over him, as a long-smouldering fire breaks into flames at last. His whole nature was in insurrection—that which was highest in him as well as that which was lowest ; and there is a higher and a lower in all. He felt the tearing pangs of jealous passion. He felt the black despair of rebellion against what he believed to be the will of God concerning him—his condition in life. His wounded conscience warred with his senses, and these had struck down the defending will. A keen consciousness of power awoke in him—of the power of intellect which would have set him in the high places of life, if fate had not bound him in the bondage of labour. A consciousness of power to know and to be known, and also of power to love and to be loved, which all men of passionate energy have more or less, and in virtue of which they conquer, because their power asserts a real claim, which makes itself felt in the woman's heart. In the midst of his paroxysm there came upon Philip, born of the peculiar tenderness of his nature, a feeling almost of pity—which was yet not self-pity—that this power of loving should run, as it were, to waste—that she whom he loved should never know its sweetness and its depth.

He never for a moment imagined that Esther would return his love. He had never sought it in any way whatever, and passion like his has ways of making itself felt far more potent than speech. He had sat Sabbath after Sabbath within the same walls, the same atmosphere of youthful religious earnestness around them, and engaged in the same tasks ; yet he had contented himself with a few indifferent words at meeting and at parting. He had refused to look upon her face, though it satisfied him as nothing else had ever done. She was by far the frankest, the kindest of the two. But in her sweet, frank kindness he knew that there was no love, and he had repelled it, conscious of its danger.

But this earthly love, which he strove to repress and trample on, had come between him and the love divine.

"O God, has it come to this!" he groaned; "that I could give up everything for her, thy love itself!"

His heart cried out for the commonest earthly lot with her, with the loves of wife and child, rather than the lot he had chosen—the life of sacrifice, the life of Christ. He wanted happiness, and not perfection. His great ideal had become a blank, and on each side stood denial and despair.

At length he could bear it no longer. He seized his cap and went out, to soothe himself with motion. The snow had begun to fall. All the air was in a giddy whirl of falling flakes, which seemed to freeze as they fell. He stood on the threshold awhile before plunging into the midst of them—stood looking over to the parlour-window of the Potters' house, from

whence a bright light was streaming. A small figure, in a cloak and veil, came up and stood before it. The figure attracted his attention. The woman threw up her veil and looked within. Philip could not see her face with any distinctness, even when she turned it toward him, because of the whirl of the snow-flakes; but she raised her arm wildly, with a gesture of menace which astonished her involuntary onlooker.

Then, with a sort of animal cry, which she muffled with her cloak, the woman moved away. Philip had nothing to do but to follow. He was filled with pity. Here was a human being as mad and wretched as himself. At first she seemed bewildered, as if at a loss which way to take, and Philip was on the point of addressing her, when a small boy passed, whistling, along. Him she stopped, and evidently asked her way. Then she hurried on in the direction of the river, so fast that Philip could hardly keep pace with her. (To be continued).

THE GUILT OF RIGHTEOUS BLOOD

BY THE REV. J. S. SIDEBOOTHAM, M.A., RECTOR OF ST. MILDRED'S, CANTERBURY

 HERE are no passages of Scripture so fearful as those which contain the terrible denunciations against sinners who persist in their sin, of Him, who, nevertheless, came to save those very sinners, if they would be saved. In the words immediately preceding those which we are now considering,* the Lord of life had been plainly denouncing to the Pharisees the woes that should come upon them for their hypocrisy, and for their careful attention to outward observance of minute points of the law, while they omitted its weightier matters, "judgment, mercy, and faith;" for making clean the outside of the cup and platter; for building the tombs of the prophets, and garnishing the sepulchres of the righteous; and for saying that had they lived in the days of their fathers, they would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. "Wherefore," the Lord continues, "ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

Probably they to whom these most awful words were addressed, very little expected a warning so terrible. For though the Lord had reproved their works to the people, yet he had declared of them that they "sat in Moses' seat," and had bidden the people to obey them as speaking to them in God's name. "All therefore," he said, "whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not after their works." And then he proceeded to

show what their works were. They seem to have assumed an appearance of great sanctity, and scrupulously to have practised many religious ceremonies; but Christ, who knows the heart, declared that their only aim was to obtain the praise of men, while they were far from the lowliness of spirit which alone could secure to them the love of God.

Having first declared their works to the multitude in general terms, he goes on to particularise them more immediately to themselves, to the effect that they not only rejected the Gospel themselves, but in their bigotry prevented others from receiving it; that under a show of ardour in devotion they oppressed the fatherless and the widow; that they sought proselytes for their own glory, whom they were so eager to confirm in error as to make each one whom they so gained "two-fold more the child of hell than themselves;" that they paid tithe of mint, rue, anise, cummin, and all manner of *herbs*, which were but of little value, but neglected that which alone was of real worth in God's sight; that they pretended high veneration for those holy men whom their fathers had murdered, and built up and adorned their sepulchres, but yet persecuted those who were even then alive, and so made themselves partakers of those very deeds of their fathers, which in words and pretence of zeal they disowned.

This zeal of theirs was not unlike much that is very familiar to ourselves in the present time, with its rage for statues and monuments. Ours may not, indeed, be a persecuting age, but it is one which is insufficiently marked by the evidences of a living faith. Men are fond of praising

* Matt. xxiii. 34-36.

the dead witnesses for truth, whom, if they were alive, they would thrust from them, or refuse to hear. They are glad, so to speak, that they have only to build sepulchres and monuments for them. Thus does Christ view the conduct of the Pharisees, because he sees through their hypocrisy. In the very words of protest against their "fathers," they confessed, against their will, that they were the children of those who shed the blood of the prophets; and the generation whom the Lord was then addressing, proved, by their persecuting spirit, that they did indeed inherit the same violent hatred of genuine goodness with their ancestors, and were glad in their hearts that the rejected enemies of all hypocrisy and trifling with the law, the messengers of God, witnesses of the truth and preachers of repentance, gave them no more trouble than that by which they added to their own reputation, in building and beautifying their sepulchres; and so the Lord declared of them, that by their continued progress in wickedness, they would soon fill up their measure, and be, indeed, ripe for destruction. Yet, further means were to be tried with them. Apostles and other ministers were to be sent among them to bear witness of the truth; but the Saviour foresaw that their obduracy and hardness of heart would continue, and that by their cruel and relentless persecution of those his honoured servants, they would provoke God more and more, till, at length, he should arise and take an awful vengeance upon that very generation, and reckon with them for all the righteous blood which had been shed from the very beginning of the world.

"Wherefore," continued the Lord Jesus, "behold, I send unto you prophets" (holy men taught by special revelation, as David), "and wise men" (who habitually taste of truth and goodness, as Solomon), "and scribes" (who adorn and apply the memorials of prophets and wise men, as did Ezra). "In these," a learned writer* has said, "for the most part, the missionary character is acquired, in wise men innate, and in prophets inspired; and hence the world hates prophets most, wise men much, and scribes least, though more than enough." "And some of them," continued the Lord, "ye shall kill" (as James) "and crucify" (as Andrew, and even as himself; for he seemed indeed by the word *crucify* to allude to himself, as one of those whose blood should be shed by that "evil and adulterous generation"): "that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation;" or, as the Saviour's words are recorded by St. Luke, "it shall be required of this generation."

* Bengel; Gnomon in Matt. xxiii. 34.

There are here two points to be considered—viz., who Zacharias was, and the circumstances under which his blood was shed; and how it was that the generation to whom our Lord was speaking appears to be held answerable for it. It is most generally believed that the person referred to by our Lord was the zealous Zacharias, the son of Jehoiada, who, for openly rebuking the Jews at this very time (B.C. 856) for their abominable idolatry, was stoned by them* "in the court of the house of the Lord." Nor is there any contradiction between "the son of Barachias" and "the son of Jehoiada," as either Jehoiada might have had two names, or else might have been called Barachias (signifying in the Hebrew *blessed of the Lord*), because Jehoiada the priest is spoken of † as having "done good in Israel, both toward God, and toward his house." It is nearly certain that it was neither Zechariah the prophet, though he was the son of Berechiah (Zech. i. 1), nor again Zacharias the father of John the Baptist, that was here alluded to, although the allusion has been applied to both of them. Yet one more Zacharias has been named as the one referred to by Christ, but in this case the "whom ye slew" must be understood prophetically, as the Zacharias in question, who was the son of Baruch, or Barachias, had not then been slain, but was slain, as recorded by the historian Josephus, *in the midst of the temple*, just before the destruction of Jerusalem. And this view would most of all amplify both the sin and the punishment of the Jews, as laying to their charge all the righteous blood from the first martyr among them to the last, even from Abel to Zacharias, in the time of the very siege of their city.‡

And with regard to those to whom our Lord spoke, and the generation to which he referred as having incurred this dreadful guilt, there can be no doubt that he intended to convey a very fearful rebuke, and to address a very solemn and earnest warning to those to whom he was *even then* speaking. But the word "generation" has been used in the Word of God with a wider and more general signification than that which refers to but a few short years, as in such expressions as, "God is in the generation of the righteous;" § "This"—that is to say, of those that are accounted worthy of ascending the holy hill of the Lord, and standing in his holy places—"this is the generation of them that seek him;" || and, "The generation of the faithful shall be blessed." ¶ So there is ever a blessed generation of the faithful, even of such as fear God, and also "a generation of vipers," as named by Christ in the Gospel of St. Matthew. As, then, the generation of such as

* 2 Chron. xxiv. 21. † 2 Chron. xxiv. 16.
‡ Matthew Henry's "Commentary," Matt. xxiii. 35.
§ Ps. xiv. 5. ¶ Ps. xxiv. 6. ¶ Ps. cxii. 2.

"obey them that have the rule over them, and submit themselves," and welcome "the feet of them that bring glad tidings of peace and publish salvation," shall, "as receiving prophets in the name of a prophet"—that is to say, "for that simple reason," because they come as messengers of God, and apart from any other reason—receive a prophet's reward; even so the generation of such as kill the prophets, and stone them that are sent to them—or failing the actual commission of *this* sin, crucify *by their sins* the Lord of life afresh, and thus put him to an open shame—if they fulfil the measure of their fathers' sin, shall have their portion also in their fathers' punishment. For though "the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son":* yet, if the sons are partners with their parents, and *in imitation* of their deeds, the children of them that murdered the prophets, as the Jews were the sons of Cain in slaying the "righteous Abels;" if Cain and all the unrighteous Jews, as well *after as under* the law, are in effect the same generation, it is no more than the terrible justice of God would require, that "all the righteous blood shed from the foundation of the world, should be required" of such a generation. For he who reads often and sees almost daily the severe judgments of God upon sinners, and yet himself deliberately continues in the same sin, does indeed worthily deserve to be punished with as many judgments as he neglected examples. He that knows that Cain was a runagate and a vagabond on the face of the earth, and how the cry of his brother Abel's blood entered into the ears of God in heaven; he that knows how the Lord's terrible prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem was accomplished; how its magnificent temple was made desolate, and its fair towers laid even with the ground, because she had "killed the prophets and stoned them that were sent unto her;" he that reads and believes these things, and yet is among the number of the despisers of the Word of God, by killing and persecuting the prophets in the person of God's messengers, or which is the same crime, by "crucifying the Son of God afresh, and putting him to open shame," by repeatedly refusing his offered mercies, and despising all calls to repentance, incurs even a greater condemnation than either Cain or Jerusalem, as having neglected and refused greater means of salvation. For "whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning," but these things—that is to say, God's extraordinary judgment upon notorious sinners—are written principally "for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come."

Inasmuch, then, as the word "generation" is clearly of wide meaning, and may be considered as no less prospective than retrospective, let us

* Ezek. xviii. 20.

all hear the solemn warning as addressed to ourselves, no less than to those who actually heard the words from the Lord's own lips. Let us make the application to *ourselves*, rather than only to the Pharisees of the Lord's time. His words are indeed terrible: "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" They, indeed, could have no hope of doing so, if they continued to reject him who was even then standing in the midst of them, and while threatening, yet warning, and while denouncing God's vengeance against sin, yet showing to sinners the way to escape that terrible judgment. It was indeed a striking view of the love of Christ which was yet afforded in the occasion of this very denunciation. He seeks out those that were ready to perish, and with repeated and importunate solicitations, entreats them to hide themselves where alone they can find safety, and where the psalmist declared his own trust to be, "under the covering of the wings" of His love. Should not their refusal to hear his entreaties, and the accomplishment of all the temporal troubles alone which he foretold for them, urge us to take the refuge to which he points, to hasten the repentance without which he declares that judgment shall indeed leave no place for an otherwise boundless mercy? And let not his messengers be reproached for openly declaring the *whole* counsel of God—for endeavouring to lead sinners to repentance, and to warn and exhort those who, less guilty, are yet careless and thoughtless. In doing so they assume not the part of the judge; without doing so, and declaring the punishment which he has decreed for the hardened and impenitent, they cannot declare their Lord's *whole* counsel; and they dare not incur the charge of faithlessness.

And let us, receiving such a warning in the spirit in which Christ would have us receive it, examine into ourselves and see what is our state, what our expectation, what our hope. We have heard much of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, let us *fear* to put on like them a *profession* of piety "for a cloke of maliciousness." This would be more detestable than avowed infidelity. Yet let not pure religion be laid aside because we abhor the dissimulation of those who have nothing but a fair appearance. There are those who are vehement against men who "for a pretence make long prayers," though they themselves never pray at all. Let us not run the fearful risk incurred by both the one and the other, but, welcoming the Saviour with the joyful acclamation, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," so live henceforth to him and in him, that when he shall appear again in power and great glory, "we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."

* Ps. lxi. 4.

ROB'S RETURN.

BY CLEMENT W. SCOTT.



IVE pounds to the man or boy who is round here first in the Beechley life-boat!"

This is what the old squire said, and what the old squire said he meant. There was no time to be lost. The night was pitch dark, and midnight had struck, but the village of Spraye had turned out to a man at the sound of the old squire's whistle. The men of Spraye were ready on the sea-shore, waiting for instructions, and the women of Spraye were by their sides, to give them comfort, and cheer them on to their noble work.

A ship had broken up in the afternoon, in the direction of the Basket Rocks, but too far out to sea for any boats to render any assistance in such awful weather, and all the evening masses of the wreck had been flung by the waves on to the beach.

The squire lived some miles from the village, on the top of the cliff, and while daylight lasted, his glass had never been off the spot where the ship went down. About halfway between the squire's "Look-out"—as a fanciful castellated summer-house he had built on the edge of the cliff was called—and the village of Spraye, lay a mass of jagged rocks, the terror of the Spraye sailors making for the village, and the ruin of many and many a fine ship.

The squire's horse was at any one's service on such a momentous occasion, as the sailors well knew; and the words were hardly out of his mouth, summoning the Beechley lifeboat, before one of the sailors was in the saddle, riding for dear life in the direction of Beechley.

The sailors of Spraye had abandoned all hope of saving a soul from the wreck. Indeed, few of them had heard of it till now.

There was no lifeboat as yet attached directly to the village, but when hands were required for the Beechley boat, the men of Spraye were ready.

The old squire stood in the centre of a group of resolute men and trembling women on the shore, and explained to them how it happened that he had come down from home and roused up the village in the middle of the night.

It was a picturesque sight. The men, lanterns in hand, stood round, eager to hear what was to be done; and the women, with their frightened faces, kept clinging to their husbands, and their fathers, and their brothers, and hardly dared listen, for fear. In the middle of them all stood the squire, an old sailor himself, who had done as

plucky deeds as any of them in his day. Three persons in the group were somewhat more conspicuous than the rest. The eldest was Martin Kent, a fine, grey-haired old fellow, who was considered a kind of father of the village, and looked upon as an oracle in maritime matters for many miles round Spraye. He was generally the steersman of the lifeboat, and the squire's right-hand man and counsellor in any deeds of daring. The youngest in the group was his daughter Grace, who broke the hearts of all the sailor lads in the neighbourhood, and was nicknamed Grace Darling, out of compliment to her spirit and her beauty. The other conspicuous person was Philip Lloyd, a man with a strangely sweet face and a herculean frame, as single a minded sailor as any in Spraye—a man who was never known to do an unkind action, or to look particularly happy. He was popular with the men, respected by the women, and idolised by the children. Some of the girls said there was a mystery about Philip, but, most probably, this was because he was too busy to gossip, and too honest to flirt for the sake of it.

Cautious and thrifty parents cultivated Philip's acquaintance, for they knew his worth: none more so than old Martin, whose will was so far considered law with Grace, that she had consented to look at Philip Lloyd with her father's eyes, and on the very next day they were to be married at the queer old tumble-down church of Spraye.

But Grace Kent clung to her father's arm on the night before her wedding, and knew that if the lifeboat were wanted, her husband of to-morrow would be one of the first to volunteer.

"There's been a wreck off the Baskets this afternoon, Martin," said the squire.

"Sorrowful enough to hear it," answered the old sailor; "there's not a soul saved in this sea."

"How do you know?"

"They couldn't put out a boat, nor more could we, worse luck. Every man in that vessel is at the bottom, I'm fearing."

"I don't know that. We can't save many of the crew, I fear; but we can save one. That's why I have sent for the lifeboat."

"Save one, sir! How? Where is he?"

"Got off on a spar from the wreck, and at this very moment, if I am not mistaken, is in the Giant's Arm-chair."

"Sure you're not mistaken, sir?" asked Martin, curiously. "If it is so 'twill be an awkwardish job."

"Martin Kent, and you, Philip Lloyd, both as



(Drawn by W. JONES.)

"Gracey fell upon her father's neck."—p. 268.

fine sailors as any on the coast of England, listen to me," said the squire. "Your lives are as dear to me as my own—you know that, for we have risked them together many and many a day, and we know one another by this time."

"We do," said the men, with one voice.

"Then, as certain as I stand here, there is a man at this moment in the Giant's Arm-chair. If he is to be saved it must be within the next two hours. He can't live till morning. I have heard the poor wretch cry—heard him call piteously for help, and upon my honour, Martin Kent, I feel I should like to save this man. Shall the attempt be made? You must answer now, Martin, for I have said enough."

Martin gave one look towards Philip Lloyd, and another towards his daughter Grace.

"Is the *Rob Roy* coming?" that was all he said.

But the old squire, and Philip, and Grace, and all the little group knew perfectly well that the attempt was to be made.

"I thought of the rocket apparatus first of all," said the squire; "we must try everything before we risk lives."

"We have tried it over and over again from the shore to that rock, and it's quite useless," said Martin. "What do you say, Philip?"

"Waste of time, I fear, Master Martin. We have talked it over many's the time. But you know what I think ought to be done."

"What's that, Martin?" asked the squire, eagerly.

"He has an idea that the rocket can be worked from the boat."

"Why not?"

"It's our only chance to-night, Master Martin, I'm positive. Will you let me try?"

Grace Kent gave a faint cry, and shuddered.

"You must not go out with us to-night, Philip, my lad. Think of the girl. To-morrow is your wedding-day, boy. You must not go."

"Here comes the *Rob Roy*!" cried a chorus of voices; and when the villagers rushed forward to welcome it, Philip Lloyd was left alone on the shore with Grace.

"Shall I go with the rest and work the rockets from the boat?" asked Philip, tenderly and quietly, when they were alone. "You must decide, Grace, darling."

The woman Grace Kent immediately said, "No," which was natural, and the woman Grace Kent also said to herself that she would go, too, and follow Philip Lloyd, her husband of to-morrow, and die with him to-night, if God willed it so—which was impossible; but the woman Grace Darling thought of the dying man on the rock, and the lifeboat, which was already being manned

with sailors who were leaving their mothers, and their sisters, and their lovers.

"You will go, I know; it is your duty, Philip, dear," decided Grace. "I would keep you, my love, if I dared, but I must not;" and then they kissed one another very tenderly, and Philip broke from the embrace of the courageous girl, and joined the bold men.

Martin still begged and prayed Philip not to go, and appealed to the squire. The boat wanted three men.

"We all want to go, do we not?" asked the squire.

"We do," said twenty men.

"Then we will draw lots."

The point was soon decided.

In ten minutes more the *Rob Roy* put out to sea, and the men left behind cheered through their tears, and the women sobbed, "God bless you!" to the crew.

Among the crew of the Beechley lifeboat were Martin Kent, who steered it, and Philip Lloyd, under whose care was the rocket apparatus. But the old squire was left behind, and when the oars of the *Rob Roy* struck the water Grace Kent had fainted in his arms.

Some three years before the *Rob Roy* lifeboat put out to sea with all in the world that was dear to Grace Kent, the name of the popular and pretty village maiden was coupled with another village hero.

Before the days of Philip Lloyd were the days of Robin Redruth. These two men had always been popular in the village, but in a different way. The young men respected Philip, and played with Robin; the old men praised Philip, and sneered at Robin; the mothers said that Robin was a "sad fellow," but kept a corner in their hearts for him all the same. They thought Philip "a worthy young man." The maidens laughed with Robin, and many loved him. As a rule, they looked down when Philip passed, and were somewhat afraid of him.

It was small wonder that the prettiest girl in the village should encourage the attentions of the handsomest man. Grace did more—she loved Robin Redruth.

Though her mother looked tearfully at her when the truth was discovered, and though her father bent over her and told her that if she married Robin she would break his heart, she still loved Robin Redruth. No arguments in the world prevail with love-sick girls.

She was grieved to displease her parents, but the girls of the village evidently approved her choice, and their dislike at Robin's preference of Grace supported her not a little through her home trials.

Not that there was so very much to be said

against Robin after all. From being a wild, impulsive lad, full of spirits and somewhat reckless in his amusements, it was supposed that he would not settle down into a very steady man. And then, of course, there was the pattern Philip, with whom he was somewhat unfavourably contrasted. Robin would have made a very fair husband, as husbands go, but Philip would make ten times a better—at least so thought old Martin and his wife. And as to Philip, he was by no means a party to this prejudice. In the days of Robin Redruth he had spoken no words of love to Gracey. He had loved her from the time that the three played on the shore as children, and he had had a desperate fight with Robin in an old cave, nominally on account of some boyish wrangle, but in reality because that wicked little Gracey had been setting these two honest boys by the ears, as wicked little women will sometimes do. But when the boys grew up to men, it seemed to be an acknowledged thing between them that Grace Kent belonged to Robin, and Philip forbore to press his suit.

He knew nothing of old Martin's decision or Gracey's wilfulness. He knew that Robin loved Gracey, and that Gracey liked Robin as much as she liked any man, and that was quite enough for him. He didn't envy Robin his happiness, but for all that he continued, in his quiet and determined way, to love Grace Kent.

Robin Redruth certainly improved vastly under the fostering care of Gracey. Her father was inclined to sail with the world's opinion. Gracey knew the intrinsic worth of Robin, by means of that sharp and accurate insight into men's character which women have, and she was determined that her parents should some day share her opinion of her lover.

And so Robin improved day by day; gave up many of his idle companions; looked at life in a more serious light; worked harder; went to church; earned more money; and Gracey rewarded the improving pupil with a renewed declaration of her warm affection.

But there came a day when a ship went out to sea, and never came back to the pretty village of Spraye, where a desolate maiden was longing for her lover.

Days, and weeks, and months passed away, and no tidings were heard of Robin Redruth. At first Gracey was quite broken down with grief at the loss of her lover, but after the first year of her maiden widowhood had passed away, the clouds of depressing melancholy disappeared from her face, and she became more like herself again.

It was then that Philip Lloyd declared the love of his lifetime, and to tell the truth Gracey liked him all the better for his generosity and reticence.

Philip's wooing prospered, and Gracey made her

parents happy by her promise that she would be Philip's wife. And now, on the eve of their wedding-day, she had allowed him to put to sea in the *Rob Roy* to save the drowning man in the Giant's Arm-chair.

Meanwhile, how fared it with the *Rob Roy*? In spite of the terrible waves, it arrived in safety within rocket distance of the Arm-chair Rock. It was getting towards morning now, and all in the boat could see the rock distinctly. The squire had timed his operations well. If the man could be saved, the earlier he was removed from the rock the better, hungry and half-perishing with cold as he must be.

Martin still somewhat distrusted the squire.

"Do you see any one on the rock, boys?" said Martin, from the helm.

There was no answer, but all eyes were strained in obedience to Martin's call.

"There's no one there," said several. "The poor fellow must have gone down."

"Stop!" said Philip, after some suggestions to return, which Martin was inclined to accede to. "There is a man on the rock. Look there; he can hardly stand, but sees us, and is trying to wave something in his hand."

Very soon old Martin and all the crew confessed that Philip was right.

"Will you try the rocket, Philip, lad?" asked Martin.

"It's the only way we can save him in this sea," was the answer.

Philip was appointed to work the rocket. He had done it often from land, and was reckoned the finest aim in the village. But it was a different matter in the boat, and the experiment had never been tried before. The first attempt failed signally. The apparatus tore up one of the benches to which it was fastened, and endangered the lives of several of the crew, on account of the inevitable hitching of the rope as it uncoiled. So they moved the apparatus nearer the bows, and fired again. This shot was completely successful, and the rope fell almost at the feet of the man on the rock. The buoy was transmitted along the rope with great difficulty, owing to the heavy sea that was on at the time; but after some moments of terrible anxiety the crew saw the poor, weak fellow fasten himself into the buoy, and they all began to haul in.

The drowning man came in perfect safety to within a few yards of the boat, Philip managing the lines all the time with extraordinary dexterity. The rescued man was now within arm's length of Philip, the sea all the time sweeping the *Rob Roy* from end to end. Philip bent over the boat's side to assist the man, who had fainted with exertion, when the boat received the full strength of a wave which nearly capsized her. Three men were flung

into the sea with the force of the blow, and only two and the rescued man from the rock were recovered.

It was nearly daylight when the *Rob Roy* got to shore. The whole village was on the beach; and the old squire and Grace Kent still on the spot from which they had never stirred since the *Rob Roy* had put out to sea.

One by one these noble fellows stepped out of the lifeboat, and one by one they walked down the narrow wooden gangway which served for a pier at Spraye. Old Martin came first; and his daughter Gracey, unable to restrain her excitement and happiness any longer, burst away from the crowd, and fell upon her father's neck. But there was some one else who always followed Martin, in order of seniority, out of the lifeboat—and how dear to Gracey! The blinding sleet and wind was full in the face of the crew, and the man following old Martin bent his head before it. It was Philip Lloyd, of course; and Gracey, unable

to hear what her father said because of the wind, detached herself from his embrace.

At the sound of Gracey's voice, the man looked up.

It was Robin Redruth!

Yes; Robin Redruth had been saved by the crew of the *Rob Roy*; and in saving Robin, Philip Lloyd had been drowned.

Poor Philip's body was washed on shore some days after; and when they carried it to the little churchyard on the hill, all the village of Spraye followed it in tears.

They wrote, "Home at last," on the cross over his grave—a sentence which had a double significance now.

Robin had remained away to make a fortune, and be more deserving of Gracey. And some years afterwards, when a happy bridal party passed through the churchyard wherein Philip slept, the bridegroom and the bride prayed that they might serve God as well as he had done.

RECOLLECTIONS OF ARCHBISHOP LONGLEY.

BY THE REV. W. BENHAM, VICAR OF ADDINGTON.

HE village of Addington is only thirteen miles from London, yet it is one of the most secluded spots in England. As you stand on the terrace of the Crystal Palace, the view is bounded on the south by the Addington hills and the outskirts of the park. The village lies on the further side of the park, at the bottom of a very steep hill; this hill is so abrupt and difficult that Croydon cabmen refuse it without extra pay, and comparatively few hardworking Londoners, who are making holiday, get so far as Addington village. The village, however, is a pretty one, and the park contains some of the most beautiful scenery in England. In the middle of the village, cut out of the park in fact, is the little churchyard, within which four Archbishops of Canterbury have been buried. The care of my predecessor has made this "God's acre" a very beautiful spot; the soft green turf, and the graves and bright flower-beds all mingled together, are well known in the country around.

It was a sad, sad day for us all in which Archbishop Longley was laid to rest in this quiet nook, a day which will, I think, always remain fresh in my memory. The still sunshiny weather of many previous days had turned the park foliage into the colour of pure gold, and now, on the 3rd of November the wind suddenly rose, and as the simple funeral procession came walking down

the long avenue of elms from the house to the churchyard, we saw the bright leaves covering the path with a thick, soft carpet, and still showering down by thousands upon pall and mourners. The whole scene from first to last was one of quiet impressiveness—a character which beffited the occasion better than any other could have done.

My own recollections of Archbishop Longley do not date back far. It is only nineteen months since he came to know me personally, but I hold the continual opportunities which I have had of seeing him since, to be the chief blessing of my ministerial life. During these months I have read in the newspapers how he always attended the Ritual Commission, received and answered addresses, and performed other national duties. Serious and important duties many of these were, and in doing them few men, it is said, could have won affection and esteem more fully than he did, yet it was another life altogether which came under my observation. I saw him at church, for instance, on New Year's Day, joining in a hymn which ended with this verse:

"Send down thy Spirit from above,
That saints may love thee more,
And sinners now may learn to love,
Who never loved before."

The earnestness with which he had sung the hymn seemed to deepen as he went on; all things else were far off, and he was alone with God, till, as

he came to the end, the tears were on his cheek. This, perhaps, is the feature of his character which I shall remember most: the earnestness of his manner at his prayers. Glance at him when you would, there were the calm, pale face, the closed eyes, the lips moving with the words, the hands at times clasping themselves earnestly. This was the man who lives in my recollection. Thus again, he came to Addington last Easter for a week's rest; he was not very well at that time, had been suffering from a cold—(I have no doubt now that it was a precursor of his last illness)—and was disappointed at being unable to attend the evening services in the Passion Week. There was a poor woman, who lived about a mile off, dangerously ill, the mother of several little children. He used to go away quietly every day and pray with her. "That is a precious life, a very precious life," he said. The woman, now quite recovered, stood by his grave in tears.

So it was in so many cases that came under my notice. The poor woman in the agonies of rheumatic fever; the lad agonised with scrofulous joints; his gardener's son, too, who died of consumption a day or two after him, and whose death was as peaceful, as full of faith, as happy as his own—the hearts of them all revived and rejoiced at the sound of his footstep on the threshold. Need I say that all this remains in my memory as an example to follow, the example of a good "parson," to use the title so honourable in old times?

When I think of him as I knew him, and then read or hear from others of his greater, or, at any rate, more public works, I see *why* he has left so bright a name behind him. To say that he was cautious, that he had tact and experience of men, is altogether beside the mark when speaking of him. He loved God with all his heart, and this was the root of his life. No one doubts that he made mistakes, that he sometimes erred in judgment; but I believe that few have had purer aims, more honesty of purpose, more genuine sympathy with men. His evenness of temper, too, I see to have sprung from the same fountain. He was sensitive to attacks, I believe, but I never saw them ruffle him. His unvarying courtesy, which made him always easy of access, and sent his visitors away happy, was well known everywhere. "He is the most winning man I have ever seen," said a Yorkshire neighbour of his to me once. And along with this, he could be stern when occasion required. Always so gentle, so courtly and winning, he put you at your ease at once; but I should think it never happened to him that any man took a liberty with him: there was perfect dignity as well as ease.

I had heard the story of his thrashing a bully, as related in a memoir of the archbishop

which has appeared in a cotemporary journal, and asked him one day if it was true. A lady sitting opposite, struck in, "It could not be, she was sure." "Really," he said, "you must not believe that I *never* fought." And there the subject ended, I think. But I have ascertained that it is perfectly true.

I am rather glad, however, to know that another story in the same paper is wrongly told. It states that when he was elected to Christ Church, and was chaired round Dean's Yard, the boys dared not pinch him as usual, for fear he should thrash them. I find that there is this much truth: he *was* chaired, but it was on his being elected king's scholar at Westminster, six months after his entering, and was not pinched because he was so popular.

About two years ago I happened to speak to him of a number of the *Quarterly Review*, which was just then exciting much remark on account of two articles in it. "Ah," he said, "the article which interests me most in the number is that on the French retreat from Moscow. It brought back to my memory such excitements as you cannot imagine."

I was reminded of this conversation the other day when Mr. James Mure, an old and distinguished friend, who was connected with him at Westminster and all his life since, sent me the following:—

"In 1815 I went up with him to town, on the outside of the coach, on the 22nd of June. The tidings had just then arrived of the battle of Waterloo. He purchased a *Gazette*, and began to read it in the middle of the street, before I could persuade him to look after his luggage, and he was nearly run over."

One more story from the same source: "He was a frequent visitor at my father's house in town and at Cheltenham, and upon one occasion when we had failed to persuade him to stay a day longer than he thought right from Christ Church, one of the party playfully observed that he was so good and strict, she was sure he would be a bishop, and that she would give him his first pair of lawn sleeves. She did so, when the occasion arrived, twelve years afterwards."

The Lambeth Conference, or the Pan-Anglican Synod, as some people called it, was held in September, 1867, soon after I went to Addington. I have sometimes thought since that the anxiety attaching to it, close after his hard work in London, permanently injured his health. In spite of his determination that it should be only a meeting in which the bishops might take mutual counsel and receive advice and guidance in their labours, there were, as appeared from the published accounts, rash and impetuous men who were bent on committing the bishops to party views. "Do not

cease to pray for us," he said more than once, without mentioning that. And when all passed off happily, wise counsels prevailing, "It is indeed an answer to prayer," said he.

Of the Conference itself, of course I saw nothing, but I saw much of the members of it. The archbishop entertained several American bishops at Addington, and they used to go to town every day. There was the venerable Bishop of Vermont, the President of the American Church, with his white beard and moustaché, handsome and commanding in appearance, and suggesting the idea of some noble old Puritan. He died soon after his return home, at about the same age as the archbishop, and from the same cause. There was the Bishop of New York, amiable and kindly, and who is giving proof to this day of his delight with England and its people. The Bishop of Texas struck many of us, I think; a very grave, handsome face, which showed heavy marks of suffering. We were told afterwards that this arose out of the terrible scenes he had witnessed in the late war. But one cannot go through the whole list.

The Conference left pleasant and happy memories behind it, and the sight of all those old men, on the last day, singing "Gloria in Excelsis Deo," must have been a grand and touching one. The archbishop was well wearied by the time it was ended, as might be supposed. "How I did sleep last night, to be sure!" he said to a lady the day after it ended; and he immediately went for a holiday to Whitby. But here a heavy blow suddenly fell upon him. A telegram announcing the dangerous illness of his daughter, brought him back to Addington at three o'clock on a rough

winter morning. I scarcely saw him then, but I was told that the earnestness of his prayers at the daily service in the household, and his short exhortations, which he continued during that sad time, according to his wont, deeply touched all who witnessed them. She died in the end of October, and there is no doubt that he never entirely recovered the shock. But he was always calm, cheerful, even playful. He sorrowed, but not as those who have no hope. He looked forward always more earnestly than ever. I shall never forget how, on the last day but one that I saw him, when I read him a touching chapter on Death, from a little book called "Pastor in Parochia," which spoke of the reunion in the heavens, his eye kindled and his breast heaved. I knew of whom he was thinking. "Sweet, oh, how sweet!" was all he said. It was a very simple chapter; there was nothing in it which the unlettered peasant could fail to understand; but thank God that prince and peasant at that solemn hour are one in their hopes and in all their thoughts.

But I must hasten to draw these few recollections to a close. I rejoice that the last words which he spoke to me directly—they were spoken after I had read the passage before referred to—were these short and simple ones: "God bless you." He caught hold of my hand with both his to do so. "The fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much," and that blessing remains enshrined in my heart. When I saw him the next day, he was perfectly sensible, and knew me, but his thoughts seemed entirely with God. How he died needs not to be told again. Better men there shall hardly be.

"NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH."

CHARLES WATERS would have been shocked at the idea of falsehood, yet he had a habit of embellishing a story to render it more interesting, to which his friends could give no other name. His mind seemed gifted with a strange power of magnifying size and multiplying number, which his schoolfellows considered very amusing. They used to say, "Take one of Charley's stories, divide it by two, then by four, and you will have the exact truth." His mother had frequently warned him of the evil of this habit of exaggeration, yet he did not try to correct his fault, and soon ceased to be aware that what he stated was seldom literally true.

Mrs. Waters, with her sons, Charles and Frederick, lived in a small cottage, to which she had removed after her husband's death. Freddy was several years younger than his brother, and had hitherto been

educated at home, but latterly his mother, from delicacy of health, felt unequal to the task of his instruction, and decided on sending him to school.

Charles had been accustomed to take a short way across the fields, for it was more than a mile to the village by the road, and at first Mrs. Waters felt nervous about allowing Freddy to accompany him, because at one part the path wound along the edge of a steep precipice. But Charles begged her to make her mind easy, as he would take the greatest care of his brother, and hold his hand in all dangerous places. Accordingly, one fine summer morning, the two boys started for school; and just as they turned out of the garden gate upon the high road, they were surprised by meeting a strange gentleman, who stopped them and said—

"Boys, have you seen any one pass here lately?"

"Oh, yes," replied Charles; "hundreds of people have passed within the last few minutes."

"Is it possible?" cried the gentleman, in astonishment. "Hundreds of men, did you say? What can have brought so many together? I trust there are no riots impending. It might be well to inform the police. Please show me the way to the village."

Charles pointed it out, and the gentleman walked on at a rapid pace.

"Charley," said Fred, "you should not have said hundreds, for I believe that means a great number, and I only saw three people pass."

"Oh, well, of course a fellow is not supposed to stop and count the exact number when he's asked a sudden question. I dare say it's all the same how many passed, unless one of them was the man he is looking for. I wonder who he is, for I never saw him before."

"I do not know," replied Freddy; "but I like him, he has such a nice, kind face."

By this time they had reached the stile which led into the fields, and, crossing over, soon arrived at the verge of the chasm-like quarry which yawned at one side of their path. Here Charles remembered his promise, and seized his brother firmly by the hand, putting him at the side furthest from danger. They were walking quickly on, when Freddy perceived a bunch of bird's-foot trefoil growing just beneath his feet, and suddenly stooping to gather some of its gold and scarlet claw-like blossoms, he stumbled over a stone, and would have fallen, had not his brother's arm upheld him.

"Take care, Freddy. Had you been at this side and made such a trip, you might have rolled over the edge, which would not have been very pleasant, I can tell you. Never mind the flowers now; come on." And without further adventures they arrived at school.

Freddy was quickly separated from his brother, and placed in a junior class. Charles, as usual, was surrounded by a group of his schoolfellows, who were in hopes of hearing some of his marvellous stories.

"Well, Charley, what news? It cannot be possible you are adventureless to-day!"

Charles could not bear the idea of failure in that for which he had gained so much notoriety, so instead of replying, as a truthful boy would have done—"Nothing remarkable happened since yesterday," he readily answered—"Adventures, indeed! I never met anything so extraordinary before."

"What—what—what? do tell, us!" exclaimed a number of voices from his delighted audience.

"Well, as I was coming along the road, I met a stranger, dressed in black, and very tall. He was a perfect giant, as high, I can assure you, as one of those trees, and he spoke in a terrible voice; without exaggeration, it was as loud as thunder."

"Did he speak to you?"

"Oh, yes. I was so frightened when he came near me, I could hardly answer. He said there was likely to be a fight in the village to-day. I think he must be a rebel chief, or a captain of the robbers, and expected to meet his whole band at our gate, for he asked had I seen men pass."

"Well, what more?"

"More! I think that's quite enough. He passed on, walking at the rate of twenty miles an hour, and I've not heard of him since. But I have a second adventure to tell you of. You must know, mother gave Freddy into my charge; and it was well she did, or he would now be lying dashed to pieces at the bottom of the quarry."

"Freddy dashed to pieces! Do tell us how that happened."

Just as Charles was about to reply, he raised his eyes, and saw standing near the door the gentleman whom he had described as a giant with a voice of thunder. The master and he had been conversing for the last few minutes, which accounted for the boys being left time to listen to Charley's wonderful stories. The giant (who was six feet high) seemed to have caught the last exclamation, for he glanced quickly at the speaker as he left the room. And immediately the business of the day commenced.

At play-hour the boys again crowded round Charles, with numerous questions—"How did it happen?" "Was he hurt?"

"I will tell you all about it. He stooped suddenly to gather a flower, stumbled, lost his balance, and went over the precipice. Just as he was rolling through the air, I made a great spring forward, caught him by one hand, which he held out for help, and with much difficulty drew him up. I wonder I had so much strength, for I was tottering on the very verge myself, but I managed it by superhuman efforts; and here he is, quite safe and unhurt. Do not tell mother anything about it, or she might be afraid to send him to school again."

"We will not. But Edward Clarke, who lives so near you, was not very well to-day, and went home early. I hope he has not told already, for he only heard the first part of the story, and has a way of taking up everything by the wrong end, and always telling what he ought not."

Charles looked rather grave at this suggestion. "Poor mother!" he exclaimed, "what a fright she will get if this absurd report reaches her."

And heartily did he wish that he had not indulged his powers of imagination to such an extent. The remaining school-hours seemed interminable, so anxious was he to ascertain the amount of mischief his silly exaggerations had caused. His worst fears were realised, for Edward, on the way home, had to pass Mrs. Waters's cottage, and thought it would be right to tell her of the misfortune which

had occurred. Accordingly, he went in, found her looking ill, but trying to struggle through the household duties.

"Oh, ma'am," he suddenly exclaimed, "have you heard the terrible news? Poor Freddy fell over the edge of the quarry, and was nearly dashed to pieces; only for Charley he would not be alive at all."

Mrs. Waters heard no more. The shock was too much for her delicate frame. She convulsively grasped a chair which stood near, and sank down insensible.

Edward was in a terrible fright. She grew so white, that he believed her dead, and rushing to the door, he screamed loudly—"Oh! help! help! I have killed her!"

At that moment he saw a tall form approach. It was the same gentleman who had been at the school in the morning.

"What is the matter, boy? Who have you killed?"

"Mrs. Waters."

The stranger replied not, but hastily entered the house, and stooping over the prostrate form, he gently raised and placed her on a couch. "My sister—my dear sister!" he murmured, "at last I have found you." Then turning to Edward—"What is the matter? Do you know the cause of her illness?"

"Sir," he faltered, "I only told her about poor Freddy, and she got white and sank down. I thought I ought to tell."

"Who is Freddy?"

"Oh, he is her little son, who fell down the quarry, and would have been dashed to pieces, only his brother Charley saved his life."

"Yes; I heard the boys speak of that. I fear he must be sadly hurt after such a fall. I must try and get the little fellow home, if the poor mother could be revived first."

The stranger kindly and gently administered the usual restoratives, and soon the sufferer opened her eyes, and gazed around in a bewildered manner.

"Sister, do you remember me?" A gleam of intelligence passed over her countenance. "Yes, I see you do. I have been seeking you for a long time, and have at length succeeded in tracing you out, and now I am here to comfort you in your sorrow. But cheer up, perhaps the poor child may not be as much injured as we suppose. I will go and look after him, and bring him back to you presently."

"Do not think I am not glad to see you, dear brother, but I can only think of my poor child. Take me with you to him, for I cannot wait till your return. Life may yet be left, though I fear there is little hope after so terrific a fall. Where is Charles? Is he safe?"

"Here, mother—here: why should you think anything happened to me? But how ill you look! What is wrong?" Alas! his conscience answered that question too well.

"My Freddy! where have you left him?" gasped the wretched mother.

"Freddy is at the door. Come in, Freddy."

She raised herself eagerly, and seeing both her sons safe, sank back, faint from excessive joy. "My child," she murmured—"who told me he was dashed to pieces? It must have been a cruel dream. My long-absent brother returned—perhaps that was a dream, too?"

Again she became insensible, and was carried to bed by the tall stranger. Charles remained by his mother's side till consciousness returned; then, as she fell into a quiet sleep, he left the room with his uncle, who, gazing at him for a moment, said—

"So you are the boy who informed me this morning that hundreds of men had passed. Surely that was not true. You cannot imagine how much trouble and annoyance your words have occasioned me. I had appointed to meet a friend at the cross-roads, to show me your mother's cottage, and the startling intelligence you gave induced me to rush back to the village. As I passed the school-house, I called to ask the master what he knew of the expected disturbances, also to inquire where your mother lived. Had you spoken the truth this morning, I should at once have discovered the object of my search, recognised you as my nephew, and all this evil would have been averted."

Charles hung his head in shame and sorrow at his uncle's rebuke, and most bitterly did he repent his inconsiderate words.

It was long ere Mrs. Waters could be persuaded that no accident had in reality occurred, and for months she was dangerously ill from the effects of the shock she had received. Poor Charles was inconsolable. Deeply attached to his mother, he accused himself of being her murderer, and as long as her life was considered in danger, no words can express the agony of his remorse. His uncle, though strongly condemning the fault which had been the cause of so much evil, yet pitied his sufferings, and felt that to so affectionate a nature his own self-reproaches were the worst punishment.

After some time Mrs. Waters's health was in a measure restored, but Charles never forgot the lesson so painfully learned. For the future, he "set a watch before his lips," and no desire to inspire astonishment or amusement could induce him to depart from the strict truth, until, by patience and watchfulness, he was enabled to conquer his long-indulged habit, and acquired as high a character for truthfulness as he had formerly borne for exaggeration.